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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/282,747	03/31/1999	JAY S. WALKER	WD2-99-007	9049

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EXAMINER

LE, KHANH H

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3622

DATE MAILED: 12/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/282,747

Applicant(s)

WALKER ET AL. 

Examiner

Khanh H. Le

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 September 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 36, 41, 42, 49 - 56, 60 - 65, 72 - 77, 80 and 81 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 36, 41, 42, 49 - 56, 60 - 65, 72 - 77, 80 and 81 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7/13/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is responsive to the Amendment and Response dated September 13, 2004. The amendment to the claims has been entered. Claims 1 - 36, 41, 42, 49 - 56, 60 - 65, 72 - 77, 80 and 81 are pending. Claims 1, 36, 41-42, 49, 51- 56, 60 - 65, 72 - 74 and 81 are independent. Claim 78 has been canceled.

Section 101 Rejections

2. Rejections of claims 1, 3, 8 - 12, 13 - 21, 26 - 30, 34 - 36, 42, 49, 50, 51, 54, 63, 72, 75 are withdrawn due to the amendments.

Double Patenting

3. Due to cancellation of claim 78, the rejection as to claim 78 is withdrawn as moot.

Response to Remarks

4. Applicants remarks have been carefully evaluated but found unpersuasive. All claim limitations properly have been addressed earlier. Contrary to argument, it is clear Spoor discloses a lesser price is charged only if the offer to buy phone services at the same time as buying the phone is accepted. (See, e.g., page 3, 5th full paragraph "...you are marketing a phone with a sale price when the customer signs up for a certain service agreement... ". Further, the motivations supplied are adequate. Thus all previous prior art rejections are maintained.

5. Following is a repeat of the last Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

7. Independent claim 1, and its dependencies 3-4, 8-12, 13-21, 26-35, 75, independent claim 36 and its dependency 76, independent claim 37 and its dependency 38, independent claim 41, and its dependencies 77-78, independent claim 42, independent claim 49, and its dependencies 50, 80, and independent claims 51-56, 57-59, 60-65, 72-74, and independent claim 81

are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katz et al., US 6,055,513 in view of, "Selling a free phone" by Dana Spoor, Cellular Business v11n2, pp 58-62, Feb 1994, Dialog File 15, Record # 00825327, hereinafter Spoor.

As to independent claim 1, and its dependencies 3, 8-12, 13-16, 20-21, 26-35, 75, independent claim 36 and its dependency 76, independent claim 41, and its dependencies 77-78, independent claim 42, independent claim 49, and its dependencies 50, 80, and independent claims 51-56, 60-65, 72-74 ,

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Katz discloses methods, apparatuses, systems (see at least Fig. 5, items 190, 192 and associated text) and computer readable media, comprising:

a data storage device; and

a processor (see at least Fig. 5, items 190, 192 and associated text) connected to the data storage device,

the data storage device storing a program (see at least col.20 lines 25-62)

for controlling the processor; and

the processor operative with the program to:

receive, during a transaction, information relating to customer activity via a Web server on a Web site (also interpreted as an on-line POS for claim 42) of a first vendor (see at least Figs. 4, 5, 6 and associated text ; col. 8 lines 22-26; col. 21 lines 9-15; purchase contact);

determine whether to provide an offer for a good or service (“an upsell”, see at least col. 13 lines 38-47)

based on the information relating to customer activity and /or a rule (see at least Figs. 6, item 310, re. “upsell determination” rules and associated text; col. 26 lines 4-12 : “rules”);

determine an offer (see at least Fig. 6 item 354 and associated text)

for a good or service from a second vendor;

display, via a Web page on the Web site (see at least col. 20 lines 9-19)

, an indication of the offer (see at least Fig. 9 and associated text) for the good or service from the second vendor;

receive customer input via the Web site, the customer input representing a response to the offer (see at least Fig. 9, item 414 and associated text);

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receive a selection of at least one item the customer desires to purchase (see at least col. 21 lines 9-15) the at least one item having an associated total price (implied);

receive, during the transaction, a credit card identifier that identifies a credit card - account (see at least col. 23 lines 27-30); and

charge a second price to the credit card account if the response indicates that the offer is accepted (see at least Fig. 6, items 360-368 and associated text ;col. 26 lines 49-58: customer billing and allocation of costs between vendors whereby the second vendor pays some of the first vendor's costs).

Katz discloses upsell offers of goods/services upon indication of and based on a primary transaction, closing/order fulfillment/tracking on the second transaction (i.e. indication of fulfillment received) (see at least Figs 5, items 210-214 and associated text), but does not disclose the offer is a conditional offer for a subsidy on the item that's the subject of the first transaction, and that the second price charged is less than the total price of the first item.

However, **Spoor** discloses selling customers phones at a discount, to the point of giving the phones for free (claim 49) , if the customer's would sign new cell phones (claims 21, 26-27) services contracts (see page 1), with the service carriers subsidizing the cost of the phone, (see page 2, 1st full paragraph), and service cancellation fees (penalties for claim 31) (see page 2, 4th full paragraph). The provision of crediting the subsidy to the customer's account so that the phone becomes a free or almost-free phone is implied in Spoor (claims 8, 50) .

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to add Spoor teaching of a subsidized item to Katz's upsell method to achieve sales for the second vendor because "it is always easy to take a chance on something free" (Spoor, page 1) "when the customer has already manifested a desire or interest to purchase." (Katz, col.8 lines 22-26) and "*the system may utilize prior purchases as a factor in determining the upsell for offer.*

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Prior purchases may indicate areas of interest, suggesting the offer of further goods within that general area of interest” (Katz, col.8 lines 22-26).

As to claim 4, Katz further discloses contact via email or telephone (see at least col. 11 lines 38-42).

As to claims 17-19, Katz implicitly discloses determining the response was received within a predetermined period of time (within the time of contact) and charging (order fulfillment) is performed only if response indicates acceptance after a certain time (implicitly, within the time of contact).

As to claims 37, 57-59, Katz further discloses receiving customer contact information , providing the offer using contact information see at least Fig. 6 item 300, registration, 350, 370, and associated text), use of a credit card (see at least col. 23 lines 27-30).

As to claim 38, Katz further discloses determining of customer contact information is stored, and requesting such if not stored (see at least Fig. 6 item 300, registration, and associated text).

Claim 81.

A method, comprising the steps of: receiving an indication. that an item. has been placed in a shopping cart of a Web site of first vendor,
in which the item has an associated price; determining whether to provide an offer for a subsidy based on the received indication;
determining an offer for a subsidy from a second vendor,
in which the offer includes a requirement to participate in a transaction with the second vendor;
displaying during a transaction, an indication of the offer for the subsidy from the second vendor,
in which the offer is displayed via a Web page;
receiving input representing, a click of a button on the Web page;
determining, from the input, a response to the offer for the subsidy ;

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and selling, during the transaction, the item for a second price if the response indicates that the offer is accepted, in which the second price is less than the price of the item.

This claim is a combination of claims 1, 9, 32, 41 and an additional limitation "receiving an indication that an item has been placed in a shopping cart of a Web site of first vendor" which Katz does not specifically disclose.

The limitations common to those of claims 1, 9, 32, 41 are rejected on the same basis.

Katz teaches upsell as soon as a transaction takes place on a website. Spoor teaches upsell at a physical POS. Official Notice is taken that online shopping, using E-shopping carts to simulate shopping in the physical world is well-known before Applicant's invention time. Thus it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made, in an on-line transaction environment, to add making the upsell when the customer puts goods in E-shopping carts to the system of Katz/Spoor, to effect the teachings of Katz, which is to provide an upsell at the point "when the customer has already manifested a desire or interest to purchase." (col.8 lines 22-26). Online, putting goods in E-shopping carts clearly indicate such interest to purchase.

8. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Katz in view of Spoor as applied to claim 1 and further in view of the article "Can mixing 'cookies' with online marketing be a recipe for heartburn" by Ed Foster, Infoworld v18n30, pp54, Jul. 22, 1996, hereinafter, the "Cookie Article".

Katz teaches automatic user activity tracking (see at least col. 21 lines 32-67) but does not teach receiving information relating to customer activity comprises reading information from a cookie, but the Cookie article teaches just that (abstract lines 1-6). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made, to complement Katz's automatic user activity tracking teaching with the cookie technology, as it becomes known,

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because it is a powerful tool for gathering data about users' activities on the Internet to enhance Katz's upsell profiling/targeting system (col. 21 lines 59+).

9. Claims 5-7 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katz in view of Spoor as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Kanter, US 5537314, hereinafter, Kanter.

As per claim 5, Katz /Spoor does not specifically teach that the step of charging the price for the at least one item comprises: charging the customer the total price; and crediting an amount of funds to an account, the amount of funds being based on a difference between the total price and the second price.

However , Spoor implicitly discloses calculating the total price then deducting the total credit to arrive at the final cost of the phone to make it free.

Further Kanter teaches crediting an amount of funds to a credit card account for incentive amounts.(col 7 l. 26-40, col 28 l. 14-45) It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to add to Katz/Spoor teachings, Kanter's specific teaching of crediting the incentive to an account to accommodate such discounting systems as used by second vendors and thus increase the flexibility of the system.

As per claim 6 (dependent on claim 5), Katz discloses the step of consummating/billing the second transaction is performed after the step of charging the total price for the first transaction (see at least Fig. 7 items 238, 264 and associated text: 2nd transaction performed after the first one). Thus logically in a discount situation as in Katz/Spoor, the credit would be given after the charging the total price.

As per claim 7 (dependent on claim 5), Kanter teaches the step of crediting comprises crediting the amount of funds to a credit card account (see at least col 7 l. 26-40, col 28 l. 14-45).

10. Claims 22-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Katz in view of Spoor as applied to claim 21 and further in view of the article "Credit Card firms drive down costs" by Stephen Ellis, Times Newspapers Limited, Sunday times, Feb. 27, 1994, hereinafter "the Ellis article".

As to Claims 22, 24 and 25 neither Katz nor Spoor teaches the step of receiving an indication that the customer has fulfilled the obligation comprises receiving an indication that the customer has switched service providers. However, the Ellis article discloses a system where advertisers offer incentives to users to switch to their credit card account services (consumers are encouraged to switch credit card service providers to lower interest rates on transferred balances, see page 1 last paragraph). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to complement the Katz/Spoor's teachings (of upselling when a customer is ready to buy based on the primary transaction and user profiling and for offering subsidies to entice taking chances with the second vendor) with the Ellis article providers switching teaching to permit that class of advertisers to implement their advertising method on the Katz/Spoor system and take advantage of Katz's upsell profiling/targeting methods.

As per claim 23 (dependent on claim 22), both Katz and Spoor discloses second vendors monitoring contract fulfillment by customers (penalties for breach in Spoor). Thus both Katz nor Spoor teach the step of receiving an indication that the customer has fulfilled the obligation with the second vendor comprises: determining a new customer of the second vendor; and determining if the new customer had been made an offer (of a subsidy in Spoor). In the case of switching providers as taught by the Katz/Spoor/ Ellis system, Katz/Spoor thus discloses the step of receiving an indication that the customer has switched service providers comprises: determining a new customer of the second vendor; and determining if the new customer had been made a subsidy.

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11. Claims 39-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katz in view of Spoor as applied to claim 37 above, and further in view of Walker et al. , US 6049,778, hereinafter Walker.

As per claim 39, Katz/Spoor does not teach that the step of receiving an indication of at least one item that a customer has purchased comprises: receiving an indication of items that a plurality of customers have purchased. However, Walker teaches just that (Fig 10A item 228; col 11 l. 59-64: early adopters get rewards). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Katz/Spoor's and Walker's teachings in order to achieve the advantage of stimulating cross-sales at an early stages of product/services development. Thus, for example, a cellular communications service provider will want to provide incentives to early buyers of cellular phones to quickly increase sale of its services.

As per claim 40, Katz/Spoor does not teach that the step of receiving an indication of items that a plurality of customers have purchased is performed at predetermined times. However, Walker teaches just that (Fig 10A item 228; col 11 l. 35-45). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Logan/Spoor's teachings in order to achieve the particular purpose of the rewards campaign, for example, to be able to quickly notify the customer that an award is given after his registration to the system identifies him as the 100th buyer and thereby secure his enthusiasm and loyalty.

Conclusion

12. Prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

13. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Khanh H. Le whose telephone number is (703) 305-0571. The examiner is on flexible schedule and can normally be reached on Tuesday-Wednesday from 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM. The examiner can also be reached at the e-mail address: khanh.le2@uspto.gov. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eric Stamber, can be reached on (703) 305-8469.

The Official Fax Numbers for TC 3600

Before Final: 703-872-9326

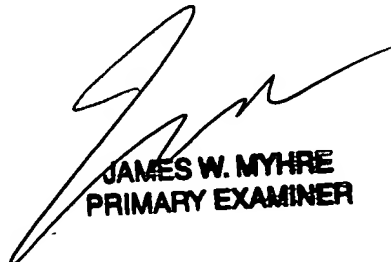
After Final: 703-872-9327

Customer Service: 703-872-9325

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

December 1, 2004


Khanh H. Le


JAMES W. MYHRE
PRIMARY EXAMINER